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Big Tech Antitrust Hearing Full Transcript July 29



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Four Big Tech CEOs testified before the House in an antitrust hearing on July 29. Amazon Founder and CEO Jeff Bezos, Facebook Founder and CEO Mark Zuckerberg, Apple CEO Tim Cook, and Alphabet and Google CEO Sundar Pichai defended their companies against accusations of anticompetitive practices. Read the full transcript here.



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-tech-antitrust-hearing-full-transcript-july-29) -tech-antitrust-hearing-full-transcript-july-29) url:
Rep. Cicilline: (00:00 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=0.06))

... Facebook and Google. Before we begin, I'd like to remind members that we have established an email address and distribution list dedicated to circulating exhibits, motions, or other written materials that members might want to offer as part of our hearing today. If you'd like to submit materials, please send them to the email address that has been previously distributed to your offices, and we will circulate the materials to members and staff as quickly as we can.

Rep. Cicilline: (00:23 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=23.69))

I would also remind all members that guidance from the Office of the Attending Physician states that face coverings are required for all meetings in an enclosed space, such as committee hearings. I expect all members on both sides of the aisle to wear a mask, except when you are speaking. I now recognize myself for an opening statement.

Rep. Cicilline: (00:42 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=42.08))

More than a year ago, this subcommittee launched an investigation into digital markets. Our two objectives have been to document competition problems in the digital economy and to evaluate whether the current antitrust framework is able to properly address them. In September 2019, the chairman and ranking members of the full committee and the subcommittee issued sweeping bipartisan requests for information to the four firms that will testify at today's hearing.

Rep. Cicilline: (01:06 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=66.67))

Since then, we've received millions of pages of evidence from these firms, as well as documents and submissions for more than a hundred market participants. We also conducted hundreds of hours of interviews. As part of this investigation, we have held five hearings to examine the effects of online market power on innovation and entrepreneurship, data privacy, a free and diverse press and independent businesses in the online marketplace. We've held 17 briefings and round tables with over 35 experts and stakeholders in support of our work.

Rep. Cicilline: (01:36 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=96.7))

This investigation has been bipartisan from the start. It's been an honor to work alongside my colleague, Congressman Jim Sensenbrenner, the subcommittee's ranking member, as well as the former ranking member of the full committee, Congressman Doug Collins. We work closely with all members of the subcommittee on both sides of the aisle who have taken this work seriously and studied these issues carefully. As my colleague, Congressman Ken Buck, recently commented, and I quote, "This is the most bipartisan effort that I've been involved with in five and a half years of Congress."

Rep. Cicilline: (02:07 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=127.49))

The purpose of today's hearing is to examine the dominance of Amazon, Apple, Facebook and Google. Amazon runs the largest online marketplace in America, capturing 70% of all online marketplace sales. It operates across a vast array of businesses, from cloud computing and movie production, to transportation logistics, and small business lending. Amazon's market valuation recently hit one and a half trillion dollars, more than that of Walmart, Target, Salesforce, IBM, eBay and Etsy combined.

Rep. Cicilline: (02:39 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=159.39))

Apple is a dominant provider of smartphones with more than a hundred million iPhone users in the United States alone. In addition to hardware, Apple's [inaudible 00:02:47] apps, including financial services, media and [inaudible 00:02:51].

Rep. Cicilline: (02:51 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=171.15))

Facebook is the world's largest provider of social networking services, with a business model [inaudible 00:02:56] despite a litany of privacy [inaudible 00:03: 00], Facebook continues to [inaudible 00:03:03] billion dollars last year alone.

Rep. Cicilline: (03:06 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=186.93))

Lastly, Google is the world's largest online search engine, [inaudible 00:03:11] more than 90% of searches online. [inaudible 00:03:14] digital ad markets and enjoys a billion users across six products, including browser [inaudible 00:03:20] and Google Maps.

Rep. Cicilline: (03:23 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=203.33))

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, these corporations already stood out as titans in our economy. In the wake of COVID-19, however, they're likely to emerge stronger and more powerful than ever before. As American families shift more of their work, shopping and communication online, these giant stand to profit. Locally owned businesses, meanwhile, mom and pop stores on main street facing an economic crisis unlike any in recent history.

Rep. Cicilline: (03:47 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=227.38))

As hard as to believe it's possible that our economy will emerge from this crisis even more concentrated and consolidated than before. These companies serve critical arteries of commerce and communications. Because these companies are so central to our modern life, their business practices and decisions have an outsized effect on our economy and our democracy.

Rep. Cicilline: (04:10 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=250.04))

Any single action by one of these companies can affect hundreds of millions of us in profound and lasting ways. Although these four corporations differ in important and meaningful ways, we've observed common patterns and competition problems over the course of this investigation.

Rep. Cicilline: (04:25 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=265.39))

First, each platform is a bottleneck for a key channel of distribution, where they control access to information or to a marketplace, these platforms have the incentive and ability to exploit this power. They can charge exorbitant fees and pose oppressive contracts and extract valuable data from the people and businesses that rely on them.

Rep. Cicilline: (04:45 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=285.92))

Second, the platform uses its control of digital infrastructure to surveil other companies, their growth, business activity, whether they might pose a competitive threat [inaudible 00:04:57] to protect its power by stopping or cutting off access for any potential rival.

Rep. Cicilline: (05:06 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=306.27))

Third, platform technologies to extend their power, whether it's through self-preferencing [inaudible 00:05:14] or requiring users to buy additional products [inaudible 00:05:17] wielded their power in destructive, harmful ways in order to expand.

Rep. Cicilline: (05:23 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=323.15))

At today's hearing, we'll examine how each of these companies has used this playbook to achieve and maintain dominance and how their power shapes and affects our daily lives. So, why does this matter? Many of the practices used by these companies have harmful economic effects. They discourage entrepreneurship, destroy jobs, hike costs, and degrade quality.

Rep. Cicilline: (05:43 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=343.75))

Simply put, they have too much power. This power staves off new forms of competition, creativity and innovation. While all these different things may still produce some new innovative products, their dominance is killing the small businesses, manufacturing, and overall dynamism that are the engines of the American economy. Several of these firms also harvest and abuse people's data to sell ads for everything from new books to dangerous so-called miracle cures.

Rep. Cicilline: (06:11 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=371.25))

When everyday Americans learned how much of their data is being mined, they can't run away fast enough. In many cases, there is no escape from the surveillance because there's no alternative. People are stuck with bad options. Open markets are predicated on the idea that if a company harms people, consumers, workers, and business partners will choose another option. We're here today because that choice is no longer possible.

Rep. Cicilline: (06:35 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=395.54))

In closing, I'm confident that addressing the problems we see in these markets will lead to a stronger, more vibrant economy. Because concentrated economic power also leads to concentrated political power, this investigation also goes to the heart of whether we, as a people govern ourselves, or whether we let ourselves be governed by private monopolies.

Rep. Cicilline: (06:55 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=415.2))

American democracy has always been at war against monopoly power. Throughout our history, we've recognized that concentrated markets and concentrated political control are incompatible with democratic ideals. When the American people confronted monopolies in the past, be it the railroads or the oil tycoons or AT&T and Microsoft, we took action to ensure no private corporation controls our economy or our democracy. We face similar challenges today. \.

Rep. Cicilline: (07:22 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=442.14))

As gatekeepers of the digital economy, these platforms enjoy the power to pick winners and losers, to shake down small businesses and enrich themselves while choking off competitors. Their ability to dictate terms, call the shots, upend entire sectors, and inspire fear, represent the powers of a private government. Our founders would not bow before king, nor should we bow before the emperors of the online economy.

Rep. Cicilline: (07:48 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=468.47))

With that, I now recognize the ranking member of the subcommittee, Mr. Sensenbrenner, for his opening statement.

Rep. Sensenbrenner: (07:53 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=473.85))

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I want to thank the CEOs for quickly working with the subcommittee to appear today. The memorial service for John Lewis on Monday required our attention. However, this hearing is vital to our oversight work, and I appreciate your flexibility.

Rep. Sensenbrenner: (08:10 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=490.36))

Throughout my long time in Congress, I have prioritized oversight as one of our seminal responsibilities. Part of that responsibility is to periodically review the effectiveness of our laws. I think it's a good and timely thing that we are now turning our attention to technological innovations, which brings us to all of your companies. Our country is stricken by a pandemic becomes a dramatic illustration of the extraordinarily reliance Americans have on technological innovations.

Tim Cook: (04:12:33 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15153.94))

Congresswoman, I can't see this email. I'm sorry. My eyes are not good enough to read it. But I see Screen Time as just an alternative, that there are over 30 parental control apps that are in the app store today. And so there is vibrant competition for parental controls out there.

Ms. McBath: (04:12:53 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15173.74))

Okay. Well, Mr. Cook, the fact is that Apple sidelined Screen Time's competition by keeping them out of the app store. And while Apple claims these competitors weren't meeting Apple's privacy standards, these apps' creators say that you admitted them back in six months later without requiring significant privacy changes. And of course, six months is truly an eternity for small businesses to be shut down, even worse if all the while a larger competitor is actually taking away customers.

Ms. McBath: (04:13:28 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15208.75))

And this is not the first time something like this seems to have happened, Mr. Cook. Let me give you another example of the harm that's been caused to your competitors. In 2010, Apple introduced an online bookstore called the iBookstore where it offered eBooks. And the only major publisher that didn't agree to join iBookstore was Random House. Random House wanted to offer its own eBooks through its own apps, and submitted their apps to be added to the app store. Amidst continued negotiations between Apple and Random House, senior VP, Eddie Q. Said, and I'm quoting him. I'm quoting him when he said, "It prevented an app from Random House from going live in the app store." Q. himself cited this app projection as a factor and finally getting Random House to give in and join iBookstore. Mr. Cook, is it fair for Apple to use its power over the app store to pressure a business to join Apple's own app?

Tim Cook: (04:14:35 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15275.81))

I can't see the email. And so I don't know the context of it, but there are many reasons why the app might not initially go through the app store gate. Because it may not work properly. There may be other issues with it. So it's very difficult to see. I would say though, on a macro basis, the gate to the app store is very wide. We have 1.7 million apps in it. It's become an economic miracle with over \$138 billion of commerce just in the US.

Ms. McBath: (04:15:10 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15310.97))

Well, Mr. Cook, I really, really appreciate that sentiment, but I want to say to you that Apple enjoys enormous power to control which apps can reach consumers, even some of the largest companies in the country fear your power. Our evidence suggests that your company has used its power to harm your rivals and boost your own business. This is fundamentally unfair and harms small businesses that rely on you to reach customers and stifles the innovation that is the lifeblood of our economy. Ultimately, it reduces the competition and choices that are made available to consumers and that is a great concern to all of us. And I yield back.

Rep. Cicilline: (04:15:54 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15354.13))

Gentlelady yields back. That concludes that round in light of the request of Mr. Gates for a third round. And because many of my colleagues would like to get more fulsome answers on a number of issues, we'll proceed to a final round. And my expectations we will conclude within the hour. And I'll recognize myself for five minutes. Mr. Zuckerberg, we've seen the dominance of several of the companies appearing before us today that it's not just harmful to our economy and competition, but it's harmful to the founding principles of our democracy.

Rep. Cicilline: (04:16:23 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>)

[https://www.rev.com/transcript](editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15383.64))

Facebook and Google are designed to keep users on their platforms, whatever the cost. Because disinformation, propaganda and hateful speech are good for engagement, they're good for business. But over a hundred years ago, the Supreme court justice, Oliver Wendell Holmes Jr. wrote, "The most stringent protection of free speech would not protect a man in falsely shouting fire in a theater and causing panic." My first question is, Mr. Zuckerberg, do you agree with that principle that there are limits to harmful and false speech, and that are particularly important when it comes to the health and safety of the public?

Mr. Zuckerberg: (04:16:58 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>)

[https://www.rev.com/transcript](editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15418.61))

Congressman, I certainly do. And I actually think that our policies go further than just limiting those types of things.

Rep. Cicilline: (04:17:10 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>)

[https://www.rev.com/transcript](editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15430.22))

Well, Mr. Zuckerberg, you have a billion users and almost 50,000 employees. And so you agree you ever responsibility to remove harmful lies from your platform, correct?

Mr. Zuckerberg: (04:17:21 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>)

[https://www.rev.com/transcript](editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15441.21))

Congressman, I think we have a responsibility to limit the spread of content that's going to be harmful for people. And also I'd like to add that I do not believe that we have any incentive to have this content on our service. People don't like it-

Rep. Cicilline: (04:17:37 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>)

[https://www.rev.com/transcript](editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15457.79))

Mr. Zuckerberg, with all due respect, except that it is often the most engaging. It brings the most likes, or it brings the most activity, which of course produces great profits. So you do have an incentive. The more engagement there is, the more money you make on advertising. So let me ask you a question. Let me give you some specific examples that will illustrate my concerns. These are some of the top 10 most shared articles on Facebook in 2020. Trump suggests injection of disinfectant to beat coronavirus and clean the lungs. Coronavirus hype, biggest political hoax in history. US hospitals getting paid more to label cause of death as coronavirus. During the greatest public health crisis of our lifetime, don't you agree that these articles viewed by millions on your platform will cost lives?

Mr. Zuckerberg: (04:18:28 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>)

[https://www.rev.com/transcript](editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15508.22))

Congressman, with respect we certainly have policies that prohibit false information about COVID that would lead to imminent harm. And we've been quite aggressive about taking that down as some of the questioning from the other side of the aisle has shown so far. I'm proud of our efforts here.

Rep. Cicilline: (04:18:47 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>)

[https://www.rev.com/transcript](editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15527.84))

Mr. Zuckerberg, with all due respect, the problem is Facebook is profiting off an amplifying disinformation that harms others because it's profitable. This isn't a speech issue. It's about Facebook's business model that prioritizes engagement in order to keep people on Facebook's platform to serve up more advertisements. So I'll ask you very specifically, what are you doing right now to protect people from demonstrably false claims related to this deadly pandemic?

Mr. Zuckerberg: (04:19:20 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>))

[editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRaJHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15560.95"\)](https://www.rev.com/transcript)

Congressman, I'll certainly answer that, but I have to disagree with the assertion that you're making, that this content is somehow helpful for our business. It is not what people want to see, and we rank what we show in feed based on what is going to be the most meaningful to people and is going to create longterm satisfaction, not what's just going to get engagement or clicks today. That's a common misconception.

Rep. Cicilline: (04:19:47 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>))

[editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRaJHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15587.03"\)](https://www.rev.com/transcript)

If that's true, Mr. Zuckerberg, how do you explain that on Monday, the second most popular posts on Facebook was a Breitbart video claiming that you don't need a mask and hydroxychloroquine is a cure for COVID? And in the first five hours after being posted on Facebook, it racked up 20 million views and over \$100,000 comments before Facebook acted to remove it?

Mr. Zuckerberg: (04:20:12 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>))

[editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRaJHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15612.51"\)](https://www.rev.com/transcript)

Well, Congressman, a lot of people shared that and we did take it down because it violates our policies. We work with the CDC-

Rep. Cicilline: (04:20:18 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>))

[editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRaJHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15618.53"\)](https://www.rev.com/transcript)

After 20 million people saw it over the period of five hours? I mean, doesn't that suggest, Mr. Zuckerberg, that your platform is so big that even with the right policies in place, you can't contain deadly content?

Mr. Zuckerberg: (04:20:34 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>))

[editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRaJHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15634.41"\)](https://www.rev.com/transcript)

Congressman, I don't think so. I think we have, on COVID misinformation in particular, a relatively good track record of fighting and taking down lots of false content, as well as putting up authoritative information. We have built a COVID information center with authoritative information from health officials that we put-

Rep. Cicilline: (04:20:52 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>))

[editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRaJHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15652.85"\)](https://www.rev.com/transcript)

Thank you, Mr. Zuckerberg. I just have one more question for you. I appreciate that, Mr. Zuckerberg. When a television station runs a false political advertisement, they're held liable for that. Why should Facebook or any other platform be different? While you may not be a publisher you're responsible maybe not for the first posting, but you then take that posting and you apply a set of algorithms that decide how you will disseminate that, which is a business decision, not a first amendment decision. And it's hard to understand why Facebook shouldn't be responsible for those business decisions.

Mr. Zuckerberg: (04:21:25 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>))

[editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRaJHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15685.17"\)](https://www.rev.com/transcript)

Congressman, in terms of political ads, we've bottled a lot of our policies off of the FCC guidelines on broadcasters and their requirements to run political ads equally from all different sides.

Rep. Cicilline: (04:21:40 (<https://www.rev.com/transcript>))

[editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRaJHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15700.91"\)](https://www.rev.com/transcript)

Yeah, I think these examples unfortunately, Mr. Zuckerberg, are just the tip of the iceberg. It's not just about COVID. Facebook hosts enables countless pages and ads that are dedicated to conspiracy theories and calls to violence, including content that led

to the white supremacist rally in Charlottesville in 2017. And Facebook gets away with it because you're the only game in town. There's no competition forcing you to police your own platform. Allowing this misinformation to spread can lead to violence. And frankly, I believe it strikes at the very heart of American democracy. And with that, I now recognize the gentleman from Florida, Mr. Gates, for five minutes.

Mr. Gates: (04:22:17 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15737.49))

Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Pachai, in 2016, there was an internal Google meeting. You attended that meeting along with Sergey Brin. A video of that meeting was leaked to Breitbart. And at the meeting, top Google executives, including Kent Walker, lamented Trump's victory, they compared Trump voters to extremists, and it was discussed that there was an intent to make the Trump win a blip in the populous movement in American history. Now, I know you've testified today in response to my questions and Mr. Jordan's questions that you don't intend this time to engage in electioneering on behalf of the former vice president. But given the video evidence of senior members of your team in your presence saying that they had the intent to make the Trump victory a blip, why should we believe that testimony today?

Mr. Pichai: (04:23:18 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15798.06))

Congressman, we do not have a view on... We respect the democratic process. We are deeply committed to it. As a company, we take pride in the information we provide to help people participate in free elections. And we are deeply committed to it, as I said to Congressman Jordan as well.

Mr. Gates: (04:23:40 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15820.92))

Do you remember that meeting in 2016 that you attended?

Mr. Pichai: (04:23:43 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15823.33))

Congressman, yes, I do. It was in the context of through the election across both sides, there was a lot of opinions. And as you know, elections are kind of a polarizing moment generally in the country. And there was a lot of rhetoric about certain issues which were affecting our employees and-

Mr. Gates: (04:24:01 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15841.51))

I understand rhetoric. I guess the question is...

Mr. Pichai: (04:24:03 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15843.16))

Certain issues, which were...

Mr. Gates: (04:24:03 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15843.16))

Oh, I understand rhetoric...

Mr. Pichai: (04:24:03 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15843.16))

Affecting our employees...

Mr. Gates: (04:24:03 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/_FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=15843.76))

I guess the question is, when the senior members of your team in your presence said that they did have the intent to change the outcome in a subsequent election. And then since that moment in time where we've seen all of these conservative websites and conservative viewpoints censored, you can understand why people would be concerned. So after your employees and top executive said in your presence that they intended to make the Trump victory a blip, what action did you take as the CEO to protect and preserve the neutrality of your platform?

Ms. McBath: (05:26:22 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=19582.47))

Sir, can you just make a blanket commitment? Can you just make a blanket commitment, whether you're aware of it or not?

Jeff Bezos: (05:26:29 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=19589.16))

A blanket commitment to what? Sorry, Congresswoman, I'm trying to be helpful.

Ms. McBath: (05:26:32 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=19592.44))

Reporting all sales of stolen and counterfeit goods to law enforcement and to victims to track large-scale offenders engaged in organized retail.

Jeff Bezos: (05:26:42 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=19602.73))

I see no reason why, if we're aware of stolen goods, we wouldn't report it. We would want the correct law enforcement authorities to be involved.

Ms. McBath: (05:26:50 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=19610.76))

Okay, thank you so much. I yield back my time.

Rep. Cicilline: (05:26:53 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=19613.16))

I thank the gentle lady for yielding back. I want to thank the witnesses for their testimony today and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle. I also want to acknowledge the extraordinary work of our team led by Slade Bond, Lina Khan, Amanda Lewis, Phil Barrenbrook, Anna Lionheart, and Joe Van Why, who've done an extraordinary job throughout this investigation and in preparation for our hearing today.

Rep. Cicilline: (05:27:17 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=19637.03))

Today, we had the opportunity to hear from the decision makers at four of the most powerful companies in the world. This hearing has made one fact clear to me. These companies, as exist today, have monopoly power. Some need to be broken up, all need to be properly regulated and held accountable. We need to ensure the antitrust laws, first written more than a century ago, work in the digital age. When these laws were written and monopolists were men named Rockefeller and Carnegie. Their control of the marketplace allowed them to do whatever it took to crush independent businesses and expand their own power.

Rep. Cicilline: (05:27:49 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=19669.66))

Well, the names have changed, but the story is the same. Today, the men are named Zuckerberg, Cook, Pichai, and Bezos. Once again, their control of the marketplace allows them to do whatever it takes to crush independent business and expand their own power. This must end. This subcommittee will next publish a report on the findings of our investigation. We will propose solutions to the problems before us. As a great American Supreme Court Justice, Louis Brandeis, once said, "We must make our choice. We may have democracy or we may have wealth concentrated in the hands of a few, but we can't have both."

Rep. Cicilline: (05:28:26 (https://www.rev.com/transcript-editor/shared/ FX24Jlb75YkV0wn0tdgEzn7hr3YnKHiYFRajHC36cpuN8-hRZCoC_eanlZkNRqAAoCUFtC5429mmv3rvjnTX3PpTLo?loadFrom=PastedDeeplink&ts=19706.61))